

"Old Castle," Baker University  
Baldwin  
Douglas County  
Kansas

HABS No. KANS-5

FAB:  
KANS

200-6000

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction  
120 South Third Street  
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

"OLD CASTLE," BAKER UNIVERSITY  
Baldwin, Douglas County, Kansas

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Present Owner: Baker University

Present Occupant: None

Present Use: Museum operated by the Old Castle Memorial Association

Brief Statement of Significance: This original stone building of Baker University dates from Territorial times.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners:  
Baker University 1858-1871  
(George Motter and others?) dates ?  
Baker University 1908-present
2. Date of erection: 1858 (ref. a quote of the Minutes of the Kansas Conference of the Methodist Church meeting at Topeka, April 15-19, 1858: "There is now in erection a stone school house 24 by 40 feet, to be at least two stories high" - From Ebright, Homer Kingsley, The History of Baker University, Baldwin, Kansas, 1951, p. 65)
3. Architect, builder, suppliers etc.:  
Reverend Nathan Taylor supervised the laying of the foundations (Ebright, op. cit., p. 65)
4. Original plans: None located.
5. Notes on alterations and additions:
  - a. Two-story building with a temporary flat roof.
  - b. Three-story building after Palmyra Masonic Lodge financed the addition.
  - c. A frame building 16' x 24' was added in 1863 for the younger students and was called "The Kitchen."
  - d. Two-story sandstone addition at west in 1868 (Torn down in 1927).
  - e. Two-story building 1903 (?) because a mill had been installed there and made the walls unsafe so roof was lowered one story.

- f. 1909 - Third-story rebuilt and a new roof added.
- g. 1953 - The walls were repointed.
- h. 1954 - The woodwork was repainted and repaired and a new roof was placed on the building.

(The above information came from: Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas, Baker University Clippings, Vol. 2, pp. 93-99 from the Baldwin Ledger, Nov. 12, 1953)

6. Important old views and references:

A drawing showing the building with the two story sandstone and one story frame additions (Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas, Baker University Clippings, Vol. 1, p. 57, from The Topeka Mail and Breeze, May 20, 1898)

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

- 1. School building until 1879
- 2. Baldwin Church held services here until 1870
- 3. Residence of President Denison of Baker University in 1870's
- 4. Dining Hall on 1st floor, dorms on 2nd and 3rd floors
- 5. Used as a Public School for a few years
- 6. College students lived here for many years
- 7. Used as a mill until machinery injured the walls
- 8. Empty but used for parties
- 9. Storage for athletic equipment
- 10. Museum

(The above information came from: Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas, Baker University Clippings, Vol. 2, pp. 93-99 from the Baldwin Ledger, Nov. 12, 1953)

Baker University is the oldest four-year college in Kansas, being chartered on February 12, 1858. (Federal Writers Project, Kansas, A Guide to the Sunflower State, Hastings House, N. Y. 1949, p. 373)

C. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated:

Records at Baker University, Baldwin, Kansas (see Mr. E. V. Wood)

Early Kansas newspapers at Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATIONHABS  
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## A. General Statement:

## 1. Architectural Character:

This stone structure of plain design is an example of an educational building dating from Territorial times.

## 2. Condition of Fabric:

The exterior is in good condition but the interior has been completely changed and is being used for museum space. The building is well maintained.

## B. Technical Description of Exterior:

## 1. Foundations:

The foundations are native limestone.

## 2. Wall construction:

The walls are solid limestone with the stones at the corners having a semi-dressed treatment and resembling quoins.

## 3. Porches: None

## 4. Chimneys: No original existing chimneys.

## 5. Openings

## a. Doorways and doors:

The doorways and doors are wood pegged construction and are said to be original. Protective metal meshes outside doors are now in place.

## b. Windows and shutters:

The windows are wood pegged construction; no shutters exist. Lintels and sills are cut stone. Protective metal mesh screens now cover the windows on the first and second floors.

## 6. Roof:

## a. Shape, covering:

Gabled roof with asphalt shingles (1909 roof per Ebright, op. cit., p. 67)

## b. Cornice, eaves: Simple wood molding (1909)

## c. Dormers: None

## B. Technical Description of Interiors:

## 1. Floor Plans:

Original plan much modified. Present plan has stairway along the wall to the left of the doorway, a small office under the stairway and a rest room at the back of the building.

## 2. Stairways:

One modern stairway along east wall.

## 3. Flooring:

All new.

## 4. Wall and ceiling finish:

Not original - now plaster finish.

## 5. Doorways and doors:

No original interior doors or doorways left.

## 6. Trim:

Probably not original. Present trim is simple painted wood molding.

## 7. Hardware:

Probably no original hardware left.

## 8. Lighting:

No original lighting extant.

## 9. Heating:

No original heating arrangement left.

Prepared by 9C Noffsinger date 7/58

PART III. OTHER INFORMATION

## A. Site:

## 1. General setting and orientation:

In a small cleared level lot facing east.

## 2. Enclosures: None.

## 3. Outbuildings: None.

## 4. Walks, driveways etc.

A small modern concrete walk leads from the sidewalk to front door (1953)

## 5. Landscaping:

One tree is near the entrance and some bushes have been planted on the site.

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1-Prepared by J P Noffsinger date 7/58